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FRIDAY
DECEMBER 20, 2019



Pulse of Wabash

Wabash Plain Dealer's new website now available

Check out our new website at www.wabashplaindealer.com and let us know what you think. Stories older than a few weeks are not yet available but will be soon. If you had an account on our previous site, you will need to create a new account. If you registered with the same email address we will be able to locate your previous subscription as well. Once registered, you can also verify your subscription. Please contact web support at web.support@wabashplaindealer.com with any questions. Thank you!

Wabash Plain Dealer's new office now open

The Wabash Plain Dealer's new office is now open on the second floor at 99 W. Canal St.

Downtown businesses to extend hours on select dates

Participating shops will be open until 7 p.m. on the following dates: Dec. 20 and 21.

VFW to host fish fry

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Wabash Post No. 286, will be having a fish fry from 5 to 8 p.m. Friday Dec. 20 at 3678 West Old Indiana 24. The menu will include hand-battered haddock, baked beans, coleslaw and hush puppies. The cost is \$8 person for all you can eat, dine in. Carry-out available. For more information, call 260-563-2463.

Breakfast with Santa planned

On Saturday, Dec. 21, Santa will be coming to Breakfast with Santa and will have a special treat for children at the Wabash County Historical Museum, 36 E. Market St.

Living Crèche scheduled for Dec. 22

A Living Crèche has been planned from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec.

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Pelosi demands impeachment trial info before sending charges

BY MARY CLARE JALONICK,
LAURIE KELLMAN
and ZEKE MILLER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi insisted on Thursday that before she will send the Republican Senate the articles of impeachment her Democratic chamber approved against President Donald Trump, GOP leaders must provide more detail about how they will handle the expected trial.

"We'd like to see a fair process, but we'll see what they have and will be ready for whatever it is," Pelosi said at the Capitol. "So far we haven't seen anything that looks fair to us," she had said Wednesday night, just after the House

approved the two charges that could evict Trump from office if the Senate agrees.

The parties' Senate leaders, Mitch McConnell for the Republicans and Chuck Schumer for the Democrats, were meeting late Thursday on trial arrangements. The two men have a tense relationship, and McConnell holds a tactical edge if he can keep his 53-member Senate majority united.

Wednesday night's vote, almost entirely along party lines, made the president just the third in U.S. history to be impeached. The House impeached Trump on two charges — abusing his presidential power and obstructing Congress — stemming from

his pressure on Ukraine to announce investigations of his political rival as Trump withheld U.S. aid.

Pelosi's unexpected procedural delay in taking the next step — apparently in search of leverage in locking in trial arrangements — got a sour response from Senate Majority Leader McConnell and from Trump himself.

McConnell said Democrats were "too afraid" to send the charges to the Senate, where Trump would be expected to be acquitted by the Republican majority. Trump tweeted,

"Now the Do Nothing Party want to Do Nothing with the Articles." He claimed that if the Democrats didn't transmit the charges, "they would lose

by default," though there is no constitutional requirement to send them swiftly, or at all.

The trial has been expected to begin in January.

Along with her tough talk, Pelosi appeared upbeat the day after the impeachment votes.

"We've been hearing from people all over the country," she told reporters. "Seems like people have a spring in their step because the president was held accountable for his reckless behavior."

Pressed about next steps, Pelosi wouldn't say. Democrats are insisting on more witnesses, testimony and documents than McConnell appears willing to provide before they name the House

"managers" who would prosecute Trump in the Senate.

"The next thing will be when we see the process that is set forth in the Senate," Pelosi said. "Then we'll know the number of managers we may have to go forward and who we would choose."

The Democratic speaker and the top Senate Democrat, Schumer of New York, met privately Thursday at the Capitol after Republican McConnell signaled in the strongest terms yet that his chamber intended to hold a swift trial and acquit the president of both charges.

McConnell denounced the "most unfair" House

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Taking a Yule Time Stroll



COOKIES: Kelly Smith, director of Charley Creek Gardens, right, serves cookies and hot chocolate Monday.

PHOTOS BY ROB BURGESS / Plain Dealer

BY ROB BURGESS
rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com

Charley Creek Gardens will host its 10th Annual Yule Time Stroll, open to the public from 6 to 9 p.m. through Monday, Dec. 23 at 551 N. Miami St., according to Courtney Harvey, development communications manager for the Honeywell Foundation.

This event is free and open to the public. Parking is available at 518 N. Wabash St. Sponsorship is provided by Autumn Ridge Rehabilitation Centre.

On Monday, Kelly Smith, director of Charley Creek Gardens, they were about 20 guests ahead of last year.

"We're excited. We've had guests from Warsaw, Gas City and Peru. It's been wonderful," she said.

Smith said the stroll took about two weeks to set up.

"It's not dedicated. We have other things we have to work on in the fall. So, in between we try to do it all," she said.

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OPEN: Charley Creek Gardens will host its 10th Annual Yule Time Stroll, open to the public from 6 to 9 p.m. through Monday, Dec. 23 at 551 N. Miami St.

Lilly Endowment gives Manchester \$100K grant

BY ANNE GREGORY

Manchester University has been awarded a \$100,000 planning grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. The grant is part of the endowment's new initiative, Charting the Future for Indiana's Colleges and Universities.

"We are deeply grateful for Lilly Endowment for its commitment to higher education and this opportunity," said Manchester President Dave McFadden. "We aspire to serve more fully the needs of northeast Indiana and the state through new and innovative academic programs that meet the evolving needs of students and employers, and through partnerships that capitalize on our collective strengths."

Lilly Endowment launched the initiative to give the leaders of Indiana's 38 colleges and universities resources to think about the



GRANT: Manchester President Dave McFadden said the grant is part of the endowment's new initiative, Charting the Future for Indiana's Colleges and Universities.

future of their institutions and accelerate strategic planning and implementation efforts to meet their key challenges and opportunities.

The Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment has allocated up to \$108.2 million for the initiative, which

will have three phases: a planning phase, an implementation phase and an invitational phase for large-scale proposals. Manchester received the maximum amount possible in the planning phase for smaller colleges and universities.

In that first phase, funds may be used at the discretion of the institution's president for consultants, staff time, conferences and seminars, travel to gather information and ideas, and preparation for a Phase 2 proposal and Phase 3 concept paper.

During the initiative, Lilly Endowment will also provide opportunities for college and university leaders to meet and discuss topics of common interest that could enrich their individual and collective efforts.

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INDOT agrees to another study of intersection

BY ROB BURGESS
rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com

In response to the community's concerns and reservations regarding the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) Indiana 24 project, INDOT will hire an independent organization to evaluate the proposed project, as well as other possible options for the intersection of County Road 300 East, stated State Sen. Andy Zay, R., Huntingdon.

Last month, Rep. Dave Wolkins, R-Warsaw, and Zay hosted a town hall meeting to discuss the project and invited residents to attend and offer comments.

In response to a Plain Dealer request last week, Nichole Hacha-Thomas, INDOT media relations director stated they had not yet hired the agency to conduct the study.

"Costs have not been determined," she stated. "INDOT will cover the costs of the study. The community asked us to take a second look at the intersection and we decided a review from an independent firm — one not associated with INDOT or the current designer — would assist with that second look."

After Monday's Wabash County Board of Commissioners meeting, board member Barry Eppley said he was "very disappointed to see that INDOT was proceeding in the face of all the feedback that was provided by the local community."

"I still believe that that modification to that intersection will not improve safety for the citizens. And I do not believe that it reduces the risk to those traveling through the community, so I am still not in favor of the project," he said. "I hope that the study will come out and show there is not that much benefit to instituting that procedure and that plan."

In a phone interview last week, Wolkins said about 70 people showed up to last month's town hall and everyone who spoke was against the project.

"This wasn't just a bunch of rabble-rousers," he said. "These are everybody that uses that intersection, the police, the fire, the farmers. EMS, everybody. Totally against it. ... We suggested that they started writing to the governor."

Wolkins said these

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New charges filed against woman in Newton County slaying

KENTLAND (AP) — New charges of murder and conspiracy to commit murder have been filed against a woman in the slaying of a woman in northwestern Indiana.

Ashley Garth, 27, of Delphi wept in court Wednesday when the new charges were filed against her in the March 29 strangulation death of Nicole Bowen, 30, of West Lafayette, the Journal and Cou-

rier reported.

New DNA results led to the new charges, Newton County Prosecutor Jeff Drinski said. He declined to reveal what the DNA results show.

Bowen's body was found in a hunting shack near the Iroquois River.

Court documents say Garrett Kirts, 21, of Lebanon, who's also charged with murder in the case, told police that the

two women began fighting at a mobile home north of Kentland. Garth was Kirts' girlfriend at the time.

Kirts told a detective that as the two women fought, he put Bowen in a choke hold from behind and she collapsed, documents say. Kirts told the detective he tied a scarf around Bowen's neck, followed by brown extension cord.



LIGHTS: After taking a casual stroll through the Gardens, guests are encouraged to warm up with a cup of hot chocolate in the Charley Creek Gardens Education and Resource Center.

STROLL

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For more information, visit [Gardens.org](http://www.CharleyCreekGardens.org) or call 260-563-1020.



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Facebook to tackle efforts to interfere with 2020 U.S. census

BY BARBARA ORTUTAY
and MAE ANDERSON
AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Facebook plans to clamp down on attempts to use its services to interfere with the 2020 U.S. census, including the posting of misleading information about when and how to participate, who can participate and what happens when people do.

Facebook and other social media companies have been trying to tackle misinformation on their services, especially ahead of next year's U.S. presidential elections. They already have similar policies around voter suppression, banning misleading information about when and where to vote, for instance.

Facebook said Thursday it will prohibit advertisements that portray taking part in the census as "useless or meaningless" or that encourage

people not to participate. The company also said it will try to identify and remove misleading census posts before people see them. But it will also remove any posts it misses after the fact, using both technology and humans to spot violations. The company said it will begin enforcing the census policy in January.

The census, which happens every 10 years, is crucial to determining how many representatives a state gets in Congress and which states and cities get billions of dollars in federal funding for roads, health care, low-income programs and other projects. The results of the 2020 census also will be used to redraw electoral maps.

Civil rights leaders worry that misinformation that discourages immigrants and minorities from participating in the census or voting

could lead to those populations being underrepresented in key government decisions for years. Misinformation could include warnings of deportation to discourage Latinos from participating, even though federal law prohibits the Census Bureau from sharing census data, including with law enforcement and immigration officials.

Rashad Robinson, president of civil rights group Color of Change, which has pushed Facebook to combat racism and misinformation, called Facebook's new policy "welcome progress." But Robinson said the policy "is only as good as its enforcement and transparency, which, to be clear, is an area that Facebook has failed in the past."

False and inaccurate information is already circulating online about the census. For example, posts in neighbor-

hood chat groups warned that robbers were scamming their way into people's homes by asking to check residents' identification for the census. That was a hoax, but it left Census Bureau officials scrambling to get the posts removed from Facebook.

Facebook sometimes plays down misleading content rather than banning it outright, as it did with a faked video of Nancy Pelosi that went viral earlier this year. It can also "downrank" false or misleading posts — including videos — so that fewer people will see them. Such material can also be paired with fact checks produced by outside organizations, including The Associated Press.

But Facebook is defining misleading census posts as a violation of its community standards and thus subject to removal.

U.S. probes 4 automakers in new air bag recall

BY TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT — The U.S. government's highway safety agency has launched an investigation into four automakers that have a potentially deadly type of Takata air bag inflator in their vehicles but have yet to recall them.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said in documents posted Thursday that it is investigating Audi, Toyota, Honda and Mitsubishi in connection with a Takata recall involving 1.4 million inflators.

The inflators made by the now-bankrupt Takata have a distinct and separate problem that can cause them to blow apart a metal canister and spew shrapnel into people's faces and bodies. The problem killed a driver in Australia who was in an older 3-Series BMW, which has already recalled more than 116,000 vehicles.

The problem is so dangerous that in some cases BMW has told drivers to park their vehicles until repairs can be made.

The safety agency says in

documents that Takata didn't provide details on the affected makes, models or model years of vehicles with the defective inflators. So it is telling the companies to recall them promptly.

In letters to all four automakers, NHTSA says they have five business days to notify the agency after finding out about a safety defect. "If your company has not yet gathered enough evidence to make a determination that the subject air bag inflators present an unreasonable risk to motor vehicle safety, reply

with a detailed work plan including the benchmark dates required to make the determination," the agency wrote in letters to all four automakers dated Wednesday.

A Honda spokesman said Thursday it hasn't determined yet whether its vehicles are affected, but a decision should be made soon. Audi and Toyota said they are still investigating. A message was left Thursday seeking comment from Mitsubishi.

NHTSA has told the companies to respond by Jan. 17.

istration is requested by

calling 260-468-2127.

Honeywell Foundation's Annual Winter Bash draws near

The Annual Winter Break Bash, hosted by the Honeywell Foundation, will take place Thursday, Jan. 2 and Friday, Jan. 3 at various Honeywell Foundation venues including the Honeywell Center and Charley Creek Gardens. For more information about Winter Bash, visit the Honeywell Center website at www.honeywellcenter.org or call the Box Office at 260-563-1102.

January Salamonie Senior Luncheon set

The monthly Salamonie Senior Luncheon will be held at noon Monday, Jan.

6, 2020 at the Salamonie Lake Interpretive Center, 3691 New Holland Road, Andrews. Anyone age 50 or older is welcome to attend. The program begins with a carry-in meal at noon. Potato soup will be provided.

Guests should bring a side dish to share, a beverage and their table service. A \$1 donation will be accepted.

Reservations may be made by calling 260-468-2127.

Artists sought for Honeywell Foundation's art competition

The Honeywell Foundation's Clark Gallery will be hosting its annual 92 County Art Show from Thursday, Jan. 9, 2020 through Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020. Entries will be accepted from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, Jan. 6. For complete guidelines visit www.honeywellcenter.org.

org/92-county-art-show. A public reception for this event will take place at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020. For more information, contact Michele Hughes at mhughes@honeywellfoundation.org or call the Honeywell Center Box Office at 260-563-1102.

Komets game to celebrate Wabash County March 13

Wabash County will be the MVP during the third annual Wabash County Night at the Fort Wayne Komets game at 8:05 p.m. Friday, March 13, 2020 at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, 4000 Parnell Ave., Fort Wayne. While supplies last, tickets can be bought for \$15 per ticket at <https://groupmatics.events/event/Wabash-community3> or by emailing mitch.meholz@komets.com or by calling 260-482-6812.

Wabash Kiwanis Club's Pancake Day returns in March

The Wabash Kiwanis Club will once again host its annual Pancake Day, which is the local service organization's largest annual fundraiser. The event will take place from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 14 at the Bruce Ingraham building at the Wabash County Fairgrounds, located just off of Gillen Avenue. Tickets will be \$8 at the door and \$7 in advance for those ages 13 years and older, and \$5 at the door and \$4 in advance for children ages 6 to 12 years. Admission for the event will be free for children 5 years and younger.

PENDING SERVICES

Edward James Hampton: 79, of Wabash, Indiana died Thursday afternoon, Dec. 19, 2019 at Parkview Regional Medical Center in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He is survived by his wife Kristi. Services are pending at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, Wabash.

INDOT

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messages must have gotten to Gov. Eric Holcomb because it was after that that the new study was announced.

County Road 300, otherwise known as Lagro Road is used by 560 vehicles per day, while Indiana 24 is used by 9,000 vehicles per day.

Crash data provided by INDOT from 2014 to 2018 showed four injury and 11 property damage accidents at that intersection. In 2018 alone, there one property damage accident.

"That is not a dangerous intersection," said Wolkins. "And the people that use that, the 500 cars that go across there, the majority of those are people in and out of Lagro that live there. It just bothers me that absolutely 100 percent of the folks are against it, yet they still plan on doing it."

All the crashes were right-angle, 80 percent of which involved northbound and westbound vehicles. The most recent fatality was in 2009.

INDOT stated the intersection was "identified as a high-crash location by frequency and severity."

The cost of the J-turn project is estimated at between \$650,000 and \$900,000. Construction will begin in spring 2020 and will have a three- to six-month duration.

INDOT estimated a round-about would cost \$2 million to \$3.5 million and would require traffic on Indiana 24 to slow to approximately 25 miles per hour. A traffic signal could cost between \$300,000 and \$500,000 including the operating cost.

"There ought to be some other way of calling attention to, 'Hey you've got a busy state highway that you're going to be crossing,'" said Wolkins.

GRANT

Continued from A1

"We are encouraging Indiana's higher education leaders to be bold and imaginative in developing creative and collaborative strategies to strengthen their institutions and further their educational missions more effectively," said Ted Maple, Lilly Endowment's vice president for education. "We are impressed with the dedication of Indiana's higher education leaders to face head-on their challenges and embrace their opportunities to build brighter futures for their students and colleges and universities."

Manchester is transitioning from a primarily small, residential undergraduate institution in North Manchester to a regional university that serves traditional and adult students with teaching on two campuses

and online. As it grows, the school's 10-year vision is to be known for its liberal arts-infused programs in all areas, innovative health science education, and vibrant and transformative student experiences.

This transition began in 2011 when it launched a pharmacy program on a second campus in Fort Wayne. That effort received an enormous boost when Lilly Endowment awarded Manchester a \$35 million grant for startup costs. Today, the pharmacy program is graduating exceptional pharmacists, and the University has launched a pioneering master's degree in pharmacogenomics (PGx).

It is now developing a master's degree in nutrition and nutrigenomics, which, like PGx, will be the first degree of its kind in the nation.

Anne Gregory is the assistant director of media relations in the Office of Strategic Communications at Manchester University.

TRUMP

Continued from A1

impeachment and reassured Trump and his supporters that "moments like this are why the United States Senate exists."

As for what the Senate would do, he said, "It could not be clearer which outcome would serve the stabilizing, institution-preserving, fever-breaking role for which the United States Senate was created and which outcome would betray it."

The Kentucky Republican described Trump's impeachment as "the most rushed, least thorough and most un-

fair impeachment inquiry in modern history."

Fighting back using McConnell's own words, Schumer said the Republican leader was plotting the "most rushed, least thorough and most unfair" impeachment trial in history by declining to agree to call witnesses including former Trump national security adviser John Bolton, who declined to testify before the House.

"McConnell claimed the impeachment was motivated by partisan rage," said Schumer. "This from the man who said proudly, 'I am not impartial.'"

"What hypocrisy."

speak up

How to contact your legislators:

U.S. Sen. Todd Young, R-Ind.

B33 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 1-202-224-5623 <http://coats.senate.gov/contact>

U.S. Sen. Mike Braun, R-Ind.

B85 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 202-224-4814 <http://braun.senate.gov/>

U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski R-District 2

419 Cannon House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515 202-225-3915

State Sen. Andy Zay, R-District 17

Indiana Senate 200 W. Washington St. Indianapolis, IN 46204 1-800-382-9467 Senator.Zay@iga.in.gov

State Rep. David Wolkins, R-District 18

Indiana House 200 W. Washington St. Indianapolis, IN 46204 1-800-382-9841 h18@in.gov

letters guidelines

The Wabash Plain Dealer encourages your letters to the editor forum, which is designed to be a forum for exchange of ideas between readers about issues of community importance.

Please sign your letter. Your name will be used with the letter that is published in the Plain Dealer. Your letter will be returned if it is your desire to remain anonymous.

Since we may want to write or call you to verify the letter, we ask that you include your address and telephone number. All our letters to the editor are published in the interest of fair play, so we trust our letter writers will refrain from personal attacks on other persons or groups.

A letter should be less than two pages long, preferably of double-spaced typing.

In order to give everyone an opportunity to participate in this exchange of ideas, please try to limit your letters to one per month per household.

To submit a letter, please write the Wabash Plain Dealer at 123 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992.

Letters also may be hand-delivered to the newspaper office, 123 W. Canal St. The office is open 9-11:30 a.m. and 1-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you should deliver a letter during non-business hours, a drop slot is located to the left of the front door. Letters may be faxed to 260-563-0816, or email them to news@wabashplaindealer.com with "Letters to the Editor" in the subject line.

inspiration corner

Daily scripture

For we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

Romans 14:8

What do you think?

We want to hear your opinions, too. Here's how to get us your letters to the editor:

Fax Mail

260-563-0816 Letters to the Editor, 123 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992

Email news@wabashplaindealer.com

The first step in ending the trade war

On Sunday, the Trump administration was scheduled to levy additional duties on Chinese goods. This deal scraps those duties, and it reduces the duties on about \$120 billion of Chinese goods from 15 percent to 7.5 percent.

In exchange, China has agreed to buy an additional \$200 billion in U.S. goods and services over the next two years, including \$40-50 billion in agricultural goods. It's also pledged to do a better job protecting U.S. intellectual property – an issue that's been a thorn in the side of multiple U.S. presidents.

But the success of the deal will be up to Chinese officials, and several Chinese officials reportedly have been less enthusiastic about the deal in private than they are in public.

Their caution is well-earned. While President Trump and Robert Lighthizer, Trump's top trade negotiator for the deal, are crowing about an expected \$40 billion to \$50 billion in annual agricultural sales, few analysts believe those

numbers are realistic. The highest level of farm products the U.S. has ever exported to China was \$26 billion in 2012.

Plus, this first phase deal doesn't do anything about the 25 percent tariffs already in place on the bulk of goods that China exports to the U.S. Considering this fact, how aggressive will China really be about pursuing increased agricultural purchases and intellectual property protections?

The truth of the matter is that China can afford to drag its feet on a "phase two" deal, but the U.S. can't.

Most economic studies have found that the burden of Trump's tariffs is falling more on American consumers and businesses than it is on Chinese ones. Experts believe U.S. economic growth would have been stronger without them.

It's also hard to quantify the impact that the uncertainties of this trade war have leveled against U.S. businesses, but that impact is significant as well. As tariffs stacked

up over the past 19 months, U.S. companies have had to disrupt their supply chains and reduce their business investments. These trends will continue as long as the tariffs do.

Meanwhile, the White House scrambled to salvage a last-minute dispute over the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade agreement on Monday after Mexico balked at a provision that would have permitted the U.S. to send its own inspectors to enforce labor standards at Mexican factories.

Mexico believed the provision represented an unacceptable breach of its sovereignty. On Monday, Lighthizer promised that the new labor attachés would not be labor inspectors and would not inspect Mexico's factories. The deal is reportedly back on track, but the episode should remind the Trump administration that the U.S. isn't the only nation with its own trade concerns – or its own means to torpedo a deal.

A version of this editorial was first published in The San Francisco Chronicle.

If the GOP continues to cow to Trump, November will bring a reckoning

Richard Nixon was bad. Donald Trump is much worse.

The threat President Trump poses to our constitutional democracy is more profound than the threat Nixon posed because Trump has intimidated one of our two major political parties into whitewashing his crimes. Senate Republicans are openly and proudly boasting of plans to rig Trump's likely impeachment trial in his favor.

"Exactly how we go forward, I'm going to coordinate with the president's lawyers. ... My hope is that there won't be a Republican who votes for either of these articles of impeachment," Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said last week in an interview with Trump's unofficial minister of propaganda, Fox News host Sean Hannity.

"I'm not trying to pretend to be a fair juror here," Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., declared Saturday.

That pretty much says it all. Before a trial begins, senators will have to take an oath swearing to "do impartial justice according to the Constitution and laws." GOP senators, however, have already announced they will violate their solemn pledge and refuse to even consider the evidence against Trump.

The president's Republican defenders in the House have relied heavily on the "no harm, no foul" defense, arguing that Trump's Ukraine bribery scheme ultimately failed. But the crime that led to impeachment proceedings against Nixon – the bugging of Democratic National Committee headquarters – was unsuccessful, too, because the Watergate burglars, like Trump, were caught in the act.

Being nabbed during the commission of a crime is evidence of guilt, not innocence.

Nixon tried his best to obstruct the Watergate investigation, going so far as to fire special prosecutor Archibald Cox in the "Saturday Night Massacre." But Nixon only took such a drastic step – which ultimately backfired – because he knew the investigation would uncover facts that were sure to turn the nation, and his party, against him.

Trump has no such worry about the GOP. He has taken the route of total and complete obstruction – itself an impeachable act – by refusing to cooperate with the House inquiry and denying requests for witnesses and documents without claiming any legitimate reason to do so. Nixon knew and feared that Republicans would affirm, in the end, the duty of Congress to serve as a check on the executive. Trump knows, however, that whatever the Constitution might say, today's quisling Republican Party will have his back.

Trump has even turned law-and-order Republicans into fiery critics of the FBI. They sound like 1960s campus radicals as they rail against abuses and warn of the dawning of a police state. It would be nice if this new GOP concern for civil liberties were genuine.

It would be nice if they were as concerned about electronic surveillance of, say, Muslim religious scholars and Chinese American computer scientists as they are about surveillance of Carter Page. But, of course, they are not.

Nixon was, despite his famous denial, a crook. Most Republicans stuck with him until the evidence became overwhelming, at which point the dam broke. The House has amassed more than enough evidence to prove that Trump is a crook, too. Unlike Nixon, however, Trump is essentially asserting that Congress has no power over him whatsoever. He is claiming some sort of divine right to do whatever he pleases – and he thinks he has congressional Republicans so cowed that they will meekly go along.

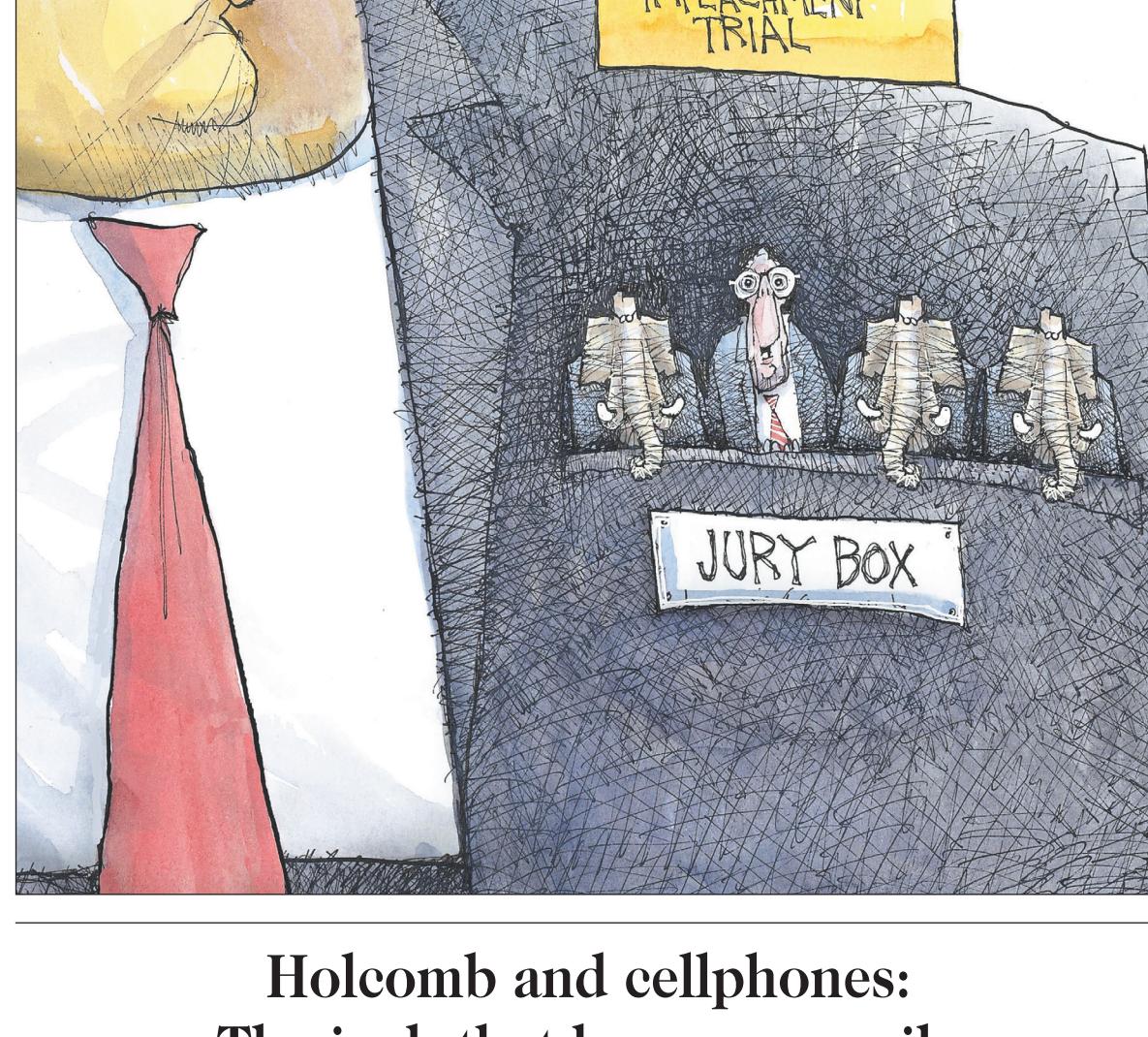
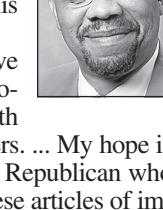
He is probably right. But there will be a reckoning.

A Fox News poll released Sunday found that 54 percent of registered voters believe Trump should be impeached, with a full 50 percent saying he should also be removed from office. A minority, 41 percent, opposes impeachment.

If the House impeaches and the Senate acquits without even pretending to conduct a serious trial, Republicans who represent safe districts and bright-red states will be fine in November. All others will struggle to explain their dereliction of constitutional duty.

And Trump, under this scenario, will become the first impeached president to seek reelection. Many Republicans are so under Trump's spell that they believe impeachment will somehow be a plus for him. They deserve – and, given the polls, will suffer – the rudest of awakenings.

Eugene Robinson



Holcomb and cellphones: The inch that becomes a mile

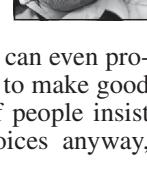
Back in the dark ages when mandatory seat belt use was relatively new in Indiana, I had a colleague who liked to say that she never nagged people about buckling up when they were riding with her. In fact, she never mentioned it to her passengers.

"Why?" she was inevitably asked.

"Natural selection"

was her answer.

Leo Morris



I like to use that story as a good analogy for what I consider proper government. She gives people the information needed to make good choices, sometimes offers incentives for making good choices and can even provide the mechanisms to make good choices easier. But if people insist on making poor choices anyway, well, that's on them.

I always mean, in those pieces, "the least government necessary," which, believe it or not, was a founding principle of this country.

They always insist I really meant, "no government at all," then proceed to deliver the "Gotcha!" they think I deserve.

I always mean, in those pieces, "the least government necessary," which, believe it or not, was a founding principle of this country.

They always insist I really meant, "no government at all," then proceed to deliver the "Gotcha!" they think I deserve.

What about the fire department when your house is burning down, they will ask, or the police department when you're robbed? What about that pothole you want filled in?

Aren't those all socialism, you self-serving hypocrite?

Actually, no, they're not. They are legitimate government functions.

My favorite "Gotcha!" – showing up in my email with tiresome regularity – is, "So, I guess you've refused your Social Security payments, huh?"

No, I have not. Had I the opportunity to opt out and use the money for my own retirement investments, I would have done so. But participation was mandatory. To whom am I trying to prove what if I don't take money out of the system I was forced to put money into?

The tenet of libertarianism people seem to have the most trouble grasping, though it really should be the easiest, is that government legitimately tries to keep us from hurting each other but risks overstepping its bounds when it tries to keep us from hurting ourselves. Autonomy should be sacred.

So, I find myself having to explain that, no, I do not object to Gov. Eric Holcomb's proposal to ban Hoosier motorists from using their cell phones while driving unless they're hands-free.

There are rules for the road that are open to challenge on libertarian grounds. There is no reason to require me to use seat belts when driving or wear a helmet when riding a motorcycle except to keep me

from behaving stupidly.

But there are also rules that protect me from others' stupid behavior, such as the one against driving while drunk.

Mandating hands-free-only cell phone use falls into the latter category. I am the one you might run into while you're fiddling with that stupid phone.

See? Simple.

Of course, there are a couple of potholes in the road an earnest libertarian should be aware of whenever he gives in and acknowledges that, yes, OK, fine, government should do this.

One is the maxim that by the time government acts, government action is usually beside the point. Most cellphones today have Bluetooth, and most new cars have systems that sync to it, so it's likely that the moment you get behind the wheel your phone automatically becomes hands-free.

The other is that when government is given the legitimate inch, it will go the illegitimate mile. Setting reasonable speed limits is a legitimate function, but it requires local knowledge of local conditions. But few were shocked to see a national 55 mph limit that, for a time, was the most ignored law in America.

If Holcomb gets his way with cellphones, all sorts of distracted driving will be on the endangered list, everything from playing the radio to scarfing down those fries you got from the drive-through. Then don't be surprised if there are hefty fines for talking to your in-car companions and there are calls for hands-free nose-picking.

Government will always – always, always, always – go too far.

I know you might not believe that. But the evidence is plentiful – if you choose to ignore it, that's on you.

I respect your autonomy.

And, you know. Natural selection.

Leo Morris, columnist for The Indiana Policy Review, is winner of the Hoosier Press Association's award for Best Editorial Writer. Morris, as opinion editor of the Fort Wayne News-Sentinel, was named a finalist in editorial writing by the Pulitzer Prize committee. Contact him at leoedit@yahoo.com.

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Can I get some light over here?

BY TODD RENDER

Pastor Alliance Church

For all the problems facing our generation in the created order, we hear all kinds of far-fetched and fallacious proposals to fix them. Some tell you not to eat animals because the need for pastures is destroying forests, and within the last few months students at a seminary apologized to a collection of potted plants as representatives for the sins humans have committed against the plant world. Some say don't fly on planes and don't drive in automobiles because it destroys the atmosphere.

It's like the joke about the custodian in a factory. Do you know when things work best for them? When no one comes in the building. It's funny when you are talking about "lights out" at the office, not so much when it's the future of humanity. Some say, because humans are the problem, the answer is to stop having children or kill them before they are born. Follow that line of thinking, and these same voices tell us that all the problems in this life would be solved if everyone would just stay home and die.

Witness the declining birthrates across the West and renewed calls for 'population control,' whether in the form of free or forced contraception, or abortion, or for euthanasia. That's answering dark problems with even darker thinking, trying to counter darkness by spreading more darkness.

This completely misses the point of existence as a matter of the first order:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him, nothing was made that has been made.

In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it...

The true light that gives light to everyone was com-



PROVIDED PHOTO
PASTOR: Rev. Todd Render is pastor of the Alliance Church and a retired medical device engineer.

ing into the world." (John 1:1-5,9NIV)

I love that: "the true light that gives light." This echoes a revelation from the Psalms: "For with you is the fountain of life; in your light, we see light" (Psalm 36:9 NIV). Do a word study on "light" in Scripture, and you will see it is often used as a metaphor for understanding. We get it. The icon for an idea is a light bulb over your head. Conversely, when someone is unaware, we say, "the lights are on, but nobody's home..." The ability to perceive, to comprehend, even to be moved to compassion are granted to us by our Creator, and each one of us can attest to moments when we first figured something out, either a punchline or the Pythagorean Theorem – "the light came on."

What the Bible is describing is that Jesus' coming into the world was just such a moment, but of universal scope and scale and significance.

Life, and the light to recognize it, are gifts, "but the darkness has not understood it." The death and evil coincident in this exis-

tence are to point us back to the Giver of Life, to illuminate the darkness in our understanding, to receive hope in the future when these, too, will be overcome. God is not finished bringing the light. Christmas, though a particular point in time, is proof positive. We remember when God came to earth as a baby, as New Life. When we hear of death and darkness, either in the problems facing us or in the proposed solutions, we can know that the truth is what directs us to light and life. We can look to Jesus.

I pray that you would receive the light: "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17 ESV), that you would receive Jesus, God's only begotten Son. Merry Christmas.

Rev. Todd Render is pastor of the Alliance Church and a retired medical device engineer. He and his wife, Lori, relocated from Fort Wayne in 2016 and have three grown children. Todd has an MS in mechanical engineering from Purdue University and an MA in ministry from Grace Theological Seminary. To start a conversation or make a comment, visit www.wabashalliancechurch.com. We'd love to hear from you.

Dora Christian Church

At the Sunday, Dec. 22 worship service at Dora Christian Church, 2325 S. Salamonie Dam Road, the minister will be Mark Wisniewski, the song leader will be Olman Sanchez, the pianist will be Sherry Brock and the organist will be Kristy Good. The message for the 8:15 a.m. service will be, "Are You Ready for Christmas?" from Matthew 1:18-25. The 10:30 a.m. service will be our annual Christmas program. The Communion Table will be served by Chuck Marion and Brad Frieden. There will be no Children's Church at the 10:30 a.m. service, as the children will be participating in the Christmas program. We will also have a brief Christmas Eve Service at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 24.

First Church of God

On Sunday, Dec. 22, at the First Church of God, 525 N. Miami St., at the 10:30 a.m. worship service, Pastor Robb Rensberger's sermon is titled, "Good News: Peace in a Divided World."

Sunday servants are Dorothy Carpenter, chairperson; Sherry Whitt, worship; Tina Eakright, special music; Nancy Kolb, piano; and Rose Sands, organ.

First United Methodist Church

On Sunday, Dec. 22, the fourth Sunday of Advent, at First United Methodist Church, 110 Cass St., worship services will be at 8 and 10 a.m., with a coffee hour following the 10 a.m. service in the MAC. At the 8 a.m. service, the prelude

CHURCH NEWS

and postlude will be played by Kathy Geible; the opening prayer and scripture reading will be by Pastor Nathan Whybrew; and the Advent participants will be Mike, Andrea and Annie Schuler. At both the 8 and 10 a.m. services, the sermon series will be, "Are We There Yet?" The scripture will be Matthew 1:18-25. The sermon by Pastor Nathan Whybrew will be, "Learning to Trust in the Journey." The children's message will be by Denise Stouffer. At the 10 a.m. service, the prelude will be by Kathy Geible, the opening prayer and scripture reading will be by Alyssa McKillip, the Advent participants will be Doug and Linda Konkle, and the postlude will be by Susan Vanlandingham. Check us out on our website at www.wabashfirstumc.org and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/wabashfirstumc>.

The worship leader will be Cliff Gardner. Pastor Wayne Balmer's sermon will be from Matthew 2:1-12 titled, "We Still Need Jesus."

Wabash Church of the Brethren

Please join us at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 22, as we worship together during this Advent season. This week, Pastor Doug Veal will be discussing "The Need for Love" based on Psalm 80:1-7 and 17-19. Children's church and nursery are available during worship times. Church and sanctuary are handicapped accessible. Sunday School begins at 9:30 a.m. Our Bible Study over the book of Philippians meets at 10 a.m. Tuesdays, excluding Christmas Eve.

Walk By Faith Community Church

At the Sunday, Dec. 22 service at the Walk by Faith Community Church in Roann, Sunday school will be at 9 a.m., and the worship and children's worship will be at 10 a.m. The pastor is Greg Wilburn. The youth pastor is Jody Tyner. Our greeters for this Sunday will be Jon and Cathy Reese and Lee and Jaci France. Jason Rouch will be sharing the message with us. There will also be a Christmas Eve service at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 24. Visit our website at www.walkbyfaithcommunitychurch.com.

Editor's note: If you have an upcoming event to submit, please send it by email to news@wabashplaindealer.com no later than five days before the event itself. Please use complete sentences, Associated Press style and Microsoft Word or PDF file formats.



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ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Gospel Light Assembly of God, 347 Southwood Drive. Pastor Neil Jeffrey. Sunday School 9:45am (all ages). Morning worship service 10:30am. Evening service 6pm. Wednesday midweek service 7pm; Kids' Korral Wednesday 7pm. Youth meeting 7pm (ages 12-19).

Sweetwater Assembly of God, 2551 SR 114 E, North Manchester. (260) 982-6179. Sunday worship 9am & 10:45am. Sunday evening outreach groups & youth ministry 5-7pm. Wednesday 6:30pm adult/teen bible study, 6:30pm Kidz Zone (K thru 6th grade).

BAPTIST

Emmanuel Free Will Baptist, 129 Southwood Drive. Pastor Terry Hinds. (260) 563-3009. Sunday School 9:30am. Sunday Worship 10:30am & 6pm; Children's Church 10:30am. Wednesday morning prayer service 11am. Wednesday Prayer meeting 6pm. Transportation available.

Southside Free Will Baptist, 360 Columbus Street. Pastor Tim Webb. Sunday School 10am. Worship Service 11am. Sunday Evening 6pm. Wednesday Evening 6pm.

Wabash Free Will Baptist Church, 1056 Erie Street. Wednesday evening prayer meeting 6pm. Sunday School 10am, Church 11am; evening service 6pm.

CATHOLIC

St. Bernard Catholic Church, corner of Cass & Sinclair. Father Levi Nkwocha. Saturday Mass 5:30pm. Sunday Masses Summer - 8am and 10:30am. Winter - 8am & 11am. Tues. & Thurs. 9am; 8:15am during school year. Weekday Masses: Mon., Wed., Fri. 5:30pm; Tues. & Thurs., 9am. Sacrament of Reconciliation 4:15-5:15pm Saturday or by appointment (260) 563-4750.

St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Main Street in Lagro. Holy Mass 12:30pm the 1st Sunday of the month except January and February.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Christian Heritage Church, 2776 River Road. (260) 774-3016. Pastor Tim Prater. Sunday 8:30am. Radio Ministry 95.9 WKUZ. Sunday School 9:30am. Morning Service 10:30am. Sunday evening 6pm. Wednesday evening 6pm.

LaFontaine Christian Church, 202 Bruner Pike, LaFontaine. Minister Brad Wright. (765) 981-2101. Sunday School 9am, Worship 10:30am, Nursery & Jr. Church available.



Church Directory

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Church of Christ, Wabash (corner of N Wabash Street and US 24). Evangelist Josh Fennell (260) 563-8234. Sunday School 9am. Morning Worship 10am. Evening Worship 6:30pm. Wednesday Service 7pm. Wednesday Kid's Jam 7pm.

CHURCH OF GOD

First Church of God, 525 N. Miami Street. Pastor Robert Rensberger. (260) 563-5346. Sunday School at 9:15am, for all ages. Continental breakfast at 10am. Sunday Morning Worship is at 10:30am. Nursery care is available during worship service. Stair lift available.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Wabash Church of the Brethren, 645 Bond Street (off Falls Avenue). Interim, Pastor Doug Veal. (260) 563-5291. Wherever you are on life's journey, come join us as we continue the work of Jesus... Peacefully, Simply, Together. Sunday School 9:30am. Worship 10:30am. Children's church and nursery available during worship.

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

Wabash Christian Church, 110 W Hill Street. Rev. Haley Asberry, Minister. (260) 563-4179. Worship 9:30am. Sunday School 11am. Nursery provided.

INDEPENDENT CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Bachelor Creek Church of Christ, 4 miles north of Wabash on St. Rd. 15; phone 260-563-4109; website: bachelorcreek.com; Solomon David, Lead Minister; Michael Eaton, Worship Minister; Ken Goble, Senior Adults Minister; Taylor McSarland, Women's Director; David Diener, Student Minister; Tyler Leland, Children's Minister; Nate Tyler, Youth & Outreach Minister; Ryan Keim, Next Step Minister; Janet Legesse, Early Childhood Director. NOW OFFERING 2 SERVICE TIMES. Adult Bible Fellowship & Worship, 9:15am, 10:45am.

LUTHERAN

Living Faith Lutheran Church (NALC), 242 S Huntington St. Wabash IN. Pastor Tom Curry. Worship begins each Sunday morning at 10:10 am with Bible study classes for all ages at 9:00 am. Everyone is welcome to join us for worship and a time of fellowship after each service. Wednesday evenings include soup supper at 6:00 pm followed by an informal service at 7:00 pm. www.LivingFaithWabash.org

UNITED METHODIST

First United Methodist Church, 110 N Cass Street. Senior Pastor Nathan Whybrew, Pastor of Visitation Rev. John Cook. Director of Children's Ministry Angel Hostetter. (260) 563-3108. Sunday Schedule: 8 & 10am Worship Service. 9am Teen & Adult Sunday School & Children's faith learning. 10:15am Sunday School for Pre-School thru 5th Grade following Children's Message (except for 1st Sunday each month). Kids First Child Care: age 4 weeks thru 12 years 6am to 6pm weekdays. Carolyn Satterfield, Director. Wesley Academy Pre-School: age 3 through Pre-K. Susan Vanlandingham, Director. This Sunday is our Confirmation and Graduate Sunday. Our notice has been adapted to reflect that.

North Manchester United Methodist Church, 306 E Second Street, North Manchester. Pastor Mark Eastway. (260) 982-7537. Worship Service 8:15am & 10:30am. Coffee Fellowship 9am. Sunday School 9:30am.

Richvalley United Methodist Church, 290 N Jefferson. (260) 563-1033. Worship service begins at 9:30am. Nursery available. Sunday School begins at 10:45am for all ages.

Roann United Methodist Church, Corner of Adams and Arnold Street, Roann. Pastor Wayne Balmer. (765) 833-2931. Worship Celebration 9am. Sunday School 10:15am.



SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED



Photo Credit: Adam Denir

Some assembly required. Those words on the box can bring chills to the spine! It brings back memories of bicycles and dollhouses, toys to be "assembled" before they can join the gifts under the Christmas tree. Usually rushed, we often dislike following the directions - the result is disaster! The fact is, you can't get around it - you have to read the instructions, interpret them, and assemble the object at hand one piece at a time. God has given us very clear instructions for a beautifully designed life. They are found in the Bible...and abundant interpretation is available. These instructions can also be found at your house of worship each week.

Daily Bible Reading

Isaiah 8:1-20	Isaiah 8:21-9:7	Isaiah 60:1-22	Isaiah 61:1-11	Isaiah 62:1-12	Isaiah 63:1-14	Luke 1:1-25
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Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society Daily Devotional at DailyBible.AmericanBible.org

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Area Calendar

Boys basketball - Southwood vs. Manchester, 8 p.m.; Wabash vs. Northfield, 7:45 p.m.

Girls basketball - Southwood vs. Manchester, 6:15 p.m.

Union files grievance on behalf of Ellsbury

NEW YORK (AP) — The Major League Baseball Players Association has filed a grievance against the New York Yankees in an attempt to regain the remaining \$26 million due released outfielder Jacoby Ellsbury.

The grievance was disclosed to The Associated Press by a person familiar with the process who spoke on condition of anonymity because no announcement was made. Barring a settlement, the grievance will be heard by arbitrator Mark Irvings. New York converted Ellsbury's \$153 million, seven-year contract to non-guaranteed, contending he violated the deal by getting unauthorized medical treatment, then released the 36-year-old outfielder on Nov. 20. The Yankees said he was treated by Dr. Viktor Bouquette of Progressive Medical Center in Atlanta without the team's permission.

Red Sox, Yanks, Cubs sent luxury tax bills for 2019

NEW YORK (AP) — Boston will pay a Red Sox record \$13.4 million luxury tax after failing to make the playoffs and the New York Yankees finished with a \$6.7 million bill, likely a fraction of what they will pay next year.

Three teams owe tax, according to end of year figures sent to clubs on Wednesday and obtained by The Associated Press. The Chicago Cubs must pay \$7.6 million following a season that ended with September fade and no postseason berth. New York has run up a total of \$348 million in tax since the payroll restraint system began in 2003, owing money in each year except 2018. The Los Angeles Dodgers are second at \$150 million, followed by the Red Sox at \$50 million and the Cubs at \$11 million.

Submit your news

The Plain Dealer is accepting all news, varsity, junior varsity, middle school, elementary school and non-school affiliated recreational sports. To get a brief in the newspaper, please provide final score and any highlights pertaining to the event, including first and last names of participants. Reports must be received by 3:00 p.m. to make it in the following day's edition. Items may be:

E-mailed to sports@wabashplaindealer.com. Called into 260-225-4523 after 11 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Please do not leave complete results on voice mail.

Mailed into Plain Dealer, 123 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46929.

Organizations or individuals e-mailing materials should call the sports department to ensure the information was received. The Plain Dealer reserves the right to edit material for length, clarity and/or style, and does not guarantee publication.

COLLEGE SOFTBALL



JACOB RUDE/Plain Dealer

SIGNING: Southwood's MaKenna Pace (bottom row, center) is surrounded by family and Indiana Wesleyan University softball head coach Steve Babinski (back row, right) as she signs her letter of intent on Wednesday.

MaKenna Pace to continues softball career at IWU

BY JACOB RUDE
sports@wabashplaindealer.com

After long proving herself as one of the best on the diamond in Wabash County, Southwood's MaKenna Pace won't have to go far to continue her softball career. On Wednesday, Pace signed her letter of intent to Indiana Wesleyan University.

"I went there for games during travel ball in junior high and since then I've always went back there. There's just something about there that I love," Pace said of her decision to choose Indiana Wesleyan.

In just three seasons so far as a Knight, Pace has racked up a litany of accomplishments, earning a pair of First

Team All-Conference honors in the last two seasons. Following her sophomore campaign in 2018, Pace was named the Wabash Plain Dealer top female athlete of the spring sports season.

For her career, Pace holds a batting average of .446 in 68 games with exactly five times as many hits (95) as strikeouts (19). Pace has won the team's Best Hitter Award all three years, collecting 58 RBIs and 37 extra-base hits, giving her a slugging percentage of .713.

Pace also holds an on-base percentage of .512 with just 19 strikeouts in her 251 plate appearances with 12 of those coming in her freshman campaign. Over her last 165 plate

appearances, Pace has struck out just seven times.

In the field, Pace has featured in multiple roles. In her freshman and sophomore seasons, Pace tosses 221.2 innings in the center circle. Last spring, she moved predominantly behind the plate, throwing just 28.2 innings while still sporting a .962 fielding percentage.

All of the work put forth on the field for Pace, who will major in nursing, laid the groundwork for Wednesday.

"I feel like I've just been getting ready for it my whole life," Pace said of what it means to continue her softball career in college. "For it to just come true, it's all right here in front of me."

While her senior campaign with the Knights still awaits this spring, Pace already has an eye on what is to come when she steps foot on campus.

Currently, Pace expects to play both third base and catcher for the Wildcats. Two of the three seniors for next season's Indiana Wesleyan side are listed as utility infielders with both have spent time at third.

"I know that there are people in (positions) right now that are seniors," Pace said. "So, I'm going to have to work hard to get there and I feel like if I work hard, it'll push everyone else to be better and just make us better as a team."

Drew Wilson returned to Georgia Southern in the 2019 spring semester and began working with strength and conditioning coaches to get back into playing shape. The 300-pounder had gotten up to 340 because of inactivity.

"I was a week on bed rest. I couldn't lift weights. I couldn't run. I couldn't walk," Wilson said.

He was given clearance by a doctor to return to football, but he did not participate in spring practice. Instead, he focused on getting his weight down and his strength up for pre-season camp.

"My first practice was a big deal for me. You know I told myself that I could play again, but I didn't know how my vision was going to effect me, seeing

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"My first practice was a big deal for me. You know I told myself that I could play again, but I didn't know how my vision was going to effect me, seeing

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NFL

Jaguars adjust clocks with Coughlin gone, stump for Marrone

BY MARK LONG

AP Sports Writer

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — About 12 hours after Jaguars owner Shad Khan fired top executive Tom Coughlin, all the clocks inside the building were reset. There was no more "Coughlin Time" in Jacksonville.

It could be the franchise's most significant change.

There's growing belief that Khan plans to keep coach Doug Marrone and general manager Dave Caldwell in 2020. Marrone and Caldwell have two years remaining on their contracts, and Khan apparently wants to see what they do can without one of the NFL's most stringent taskmasters trying to control everything from draft picks to sack choices.

"We'd love to see coach Marrone stick around and see this through," Pro Bowl defensive end Calais Campbell. "Change can be good. Too much change can work against you."

The clocks were the most obvious difference following Coughlin's departure Wednesday.

"It threw me off when I first got here," defensive tackle Abry Jones said. "I thought I was late. That's probably the strongest adjustment we're going to have to get to, just resetting 5 minutes back."

Khan said he decided weeks ago to fire Coughlin, who botched several draft picks, failed repeatedly to fix the team's quarterback situation and upset star cornerback Jalen Ramsey so much that he faked a back injury to avoid playing for Jacksonville.

Khan adjusted his timeline after the NFL Players Association slammed Coughlin on Monday. The union said

more than 25% of player grievances filed in the last two years have been against the Jaguars — against Coughlin, really — and warned players to "consider this when you have a chance to select your next club."

It was damage Khan had to address.

"Mr. Khan was trying to send a message to the league and everyone else," Jones said. "No one wants to have that on their team, where they have disgruntled players and they're trying to get money back and all that."

With Coughlin gone, everyone in the organization can relax a little.

Marrone might not have to win his final two games, beginning Sunday at Atlanta (5-9), but he probably can't afford another embarrassment. The Jaguars (5-9) have lost 19 of their last 26 games, 11 of those by double digits and six by 20 or more points.

They dropped five straight by at least 17 points — the first NFL team to do that since Tampa Bay in 1986 — before scoring twice in the final 5:15 last week to upset Oakland 20-16.

Players praised Marrone for keeping them from crumbling earlier amid one of the strangest seasons in franchise history. Among the drama:

■ Linebacker Telvin Smith, the team's top tackler the past two seasons, abruptly walked away from football in May.

■ Defensive end Yannick Ngakoue skipped most of the offseason and part of training camp in a contract dispute that remains unsettled.

■ Quarterback Nick Foles broke his left collarbone 11 plays into the opener and missed eight games.

■ Ramsey got in a heated

sideline exchange with Marrone at Houston and a much-less public one with Coughlin after the Week 2 game. Ramsey demanded a trade and refused to play until he got shipped to the Los Angeles Rams.

"We've had a lot of noise," Campbell said. "Coach Marrone's done an incredible job keeping the guys focused and staying on the task at hand. That's impressive. He's a very good coach."

Coughlin won two Super Bowls as coach of the New York Giants. But he clearly failed to make the transition from the sideline to the front office, unable to stop meddling in game plans and seemingly unwilling to ease up on his mandates and minutiae. Moving clocks ahead 5 minutes was just one of Coughlin's many nuances. Overreaching with fines was another.

He tried to fine running back Leonard Fournette, who was inactive, more than \$99,000 for sitting on the bench during the 2018 season finale.

He tried to fine defensive end Dante Fowler \$700,000 for missing "mandatory" appointments with team trainers during the 2018 offseason.

An arbitrator overturned both of those fines — and dozens more levied by Coughlin.

Some stood. He fined cornerback A.J. Bouye \$10,000 for missing a yoga class. He fined defensive end Dawaune Smoot \$25,000 for missing a team breakfast.

"You have players from other teams come and ask me about the fines, like, 'Is it true y'all getting fined for stuff like this?'" Bouye said. "They laugh at me because they think I'm lying. It makes no sense."



Here We Grow Again: Merry Christmas!

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ON THE AIR

BIATHLON
6 p.m.
NBCSN: IBU: World Cup, Women's 7.5km Sprint, Le Grand Bornand, France (taped)

COLLEGE BASKETBALL (MEN'S)
6 p.m.
BTN: Central Connecticut State at Penn State

7 p.m.
ACCN: Binghamton at Pittsburgh

SECN: Southern Methodist at Georgia 9 p.m.

ACCN: Jacksonville at Clemson

FS1: North Dakota State at Marquette

COLLEGE BASKETBALL (WOMEN'S)
1 p.m.
SECN: Illinois at Missouri

COLLEGE FOOTBALL
2 p.m.
ESPN: The Bahamas Bowl: Charlotte vs. Buffalo, Nassau, Bahamas

7:30 p.m.
ESPN2: The Frisco Bowl: Utah State vs. Kent State, Frisco, Texas

8 p.m.
ESPN: NCAA DIII: Wisconsin (Whitewater) vs. North Central College (Ill.), Championship, Shenandoah, Texas

COLLEGE WRESTLING
7 p.m.
FS1: Oregon State at Nebraska

GOLF
10 p.m.
GOLF: EPGA Tour: The Australian PGA Championship, Third Round, Benowa, Australia

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL
11 p.m.
ESPN: Eastside Catholic (Wash.) vs. Marietta (Ga.), Las Vegas

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS
10 p.m.

PARAMOUNT: Bellator 235 Main Card: Josh Barnett vs. Ronny Markes (heavyweight), Honolulu

2 a.m. (Saturday)

ESPN: UFC Fight Night Prelims: Undercard Bouts, Busan, South Korea

NBA BASKETBALL

8 p.m.
ESPN: Dallas at Philadelphia

10:30 p.m.
ESPN: New Orleans at Golden State

NBAGL BASKETBALL

3 p.m.
ESPN: Winter Showcase: Raptors 905 vs. Santa Cruz, Las Vegas

3:30 p.m.
NBATV: Winter Showcase: Erie vs. Oklahoma City, Las Vegas

5:30 p.m.
ESPN: Winter Showcase: Westchester vs. Greensboro, Las Vegas

8 p.m.
ESPN: Winter Showcase: Northern Arizona vs. Fort Wayne, Las Vegas

10:30 p.m.
ESPN: Winter Showcase: Grand Rapids vs. Memphis, Las Vegas

NHL HOCKEY

7 p.m.
NHLN: Toronto at NY Rangers

SNOWBOARDING

7 p.m.
NBCSN: FIS: World Cup, Big Air, Atlanta

SOCCER (MEN'S)

2:20 p.m.
FS2: Bundesliga: Borussia Dortmund at Hoffenheim

TENNIS

6 a.m.
TENNIS: The World Tennis Championship: Fifth Place and Semifinals, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

SCOREBOARD

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Bowl Glance
Friday, Dec. 20

Bahamas Bowl

Buffalo (7-5) vs. Charlotte (7-5), 2 p.m. (ESPN)

Frisco (Texas) Bowl

Utah State (7-5) vs. Kent State (6-6), 7:30 p.m. (ESPN2)

Saturday, Dec. 21

Celebration Bowl

At Atlanta

NC A&T (8-3) vs. Alcorn State (9-3), Noon (ABC)

New Mexico Bowl

Albuquerque

Central Michigan (8-5) vs. San Diego State (9-3), 2 p.m. (ESPN)

Cure Bowl

Orlando, Fla.

Liberty (7-5) vs. Georgia Southern (7-5), 2:30 p.m. (CBSSN)

Boca Raton (Fla.) Bowl

SMU (10-2) vs. FAU (10-3), 3:30 p.m. (ABC)

Camella Bowl

Montgomery, Ala.

FIU (6-6) vs. Arkansas State (7-5), 5:30 p.m. (ESPN)

Las Vegas Bowl

Boise State (12-1) vs. Washington (7-5), 7:30 p.m. (ABC)

New Orleans Bowl

UAB (9-4) vs. Appalachian State (12-1), 9 p.m. (ESPN)

Monday, Dec. 23

Gaspasiria Bowl

At Tampa, Fla.

UCF (9-3) vs. Marshall (8-4), 2:30 p.m. (ESPN)

Tuesday, Dec. 24

Hawaii Bowl

Thursday, Dec. 26

Independence Bowl

Shreveport, La.

Miami (6-6) vs. Louisiana Tech (9-3), 4 p.m. (ESPN)

Quick Lane Bowl, Detroit

Pittsburgh (7-5) vs. Eastern Michigan (6-6), 8 p.m. (ESPN)

Friday, Dec. 27

Military Bowl

Annapolis, Md.

North Carolina (6-6) vs. Temple (8-4), Noon (ESPN)

Pinstripe Bowl, New York

Wake Forest (8-4) vs. Michigan State (6-6), 3:20 p.m. (ESPN)

Texas Bowl, Houston

Oklahoma State (8-4) vs. Texas A&M (7-5), 6:45 p.m. (ESPN)

Holiday Bowl, San Diego

Iowa (9-3) vs. Southern Cal (8-4), 8 p.m. (FS1)

Cheez-It Bowl, Phoenix

Air Force (10-2) vs. Washington State (6-6), 10:15 p.m. (ESPN)

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

x-New England 11 3 0 .786 372 181

x-Buffalo 10 4 0 .714 291 222

N.Y. Jets 5 9 0 .357 247 343

Miami 3 11 0 214 241 435

South

Houston 9 5 0 .643 341 330

Tennessee 8 6 0 .571 339 279

Indianapolis 6 8 0 .429 303 329

Jacksonville 5 9 0 .357 250 355

North

y-Baltimore 12 2 0 .857 472 257

Pittsburgh 8 6 0 .571 269 259

Cleveland 6 8 0 .429 297 329

Cincinnati 1 13 0 071 211 359

West

y-City 10 4 0 .714 394 284

Oakland 6 8 0 .429 274 386

Denver 5 9 0 .357 239 284

L.A. Chargers 5 9 0 .357 299 290

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

Dallas 7 7 0 .500 378 288

Philadelphia 7 7 0 .500 334 222

N.Y. Giants 3 11 0 214 283 382

Washington 3 11 0 214 215 347

South

y-New Orleans 11 3 0 .786 378 303

Tampa Bay 7 7 0 .500 416 398

Atlanta 5 9 0 .357 329 365

Carolina 5 9 0 .357 324 390

North

x-Green Bay 11 3 0 .786 330 283

Minnesota 10 4 0 .714 378 259

Chicago 7 7 0 .500 256 253

Detroit 3 10 1 250 304 373

West

x-San Francisco 11 3 0 .786 419 258

x-Seattle 11 3 0 .786 371 345

L.A. Rams 8 6 0 .724 332 306

Arizona 4 9 1 .321 310 398

x-clinched playoff spot

y-clinched division

Saturday's Games

Houston at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m.

Buffalo at New England, 4:30 p.m.

L.A. Rams at San Francisco, 8:15 p.m.

Sunday's Games

N.Y. Giants at Washington, 1 p.m.

Cincinnati at Miami, 1 p.m.

New Orleans at Tennessee, 1 p.m.

Baltimore at Cleveland, 1 p.m.

Carolina at Indianapolis, 1 p.m.

Jacksonville at Atlanta, 1 p.m.

Oakland at L.A. Chargers, 4:05 p.m.

Detroit at Denver, 4:05 p.m.

Arizona at Seattle, 4:25 p.m.

Dallas at Philadelphia, 4:25 p.m.

Kansas City at Chicago, 8:20 p.m.

Monday's Game

Green Bay at Minnesota, 8:15 p.m.

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

W L Pct GB

Boston 18 7 .720 —

Toronto 19 8 .704 —

Philadelphia 20 9 .690 —

Brooklyn 15 12 .556 4

New York 7 21 .250 12/2

Southeast Division

W L Pct GB

Miami 20 8 .714 —

NHL

ON THE AIR

PARAMOUNT: Bellator 235 Main Card: Josh Barnett vs. Ronny Markes (heavyweight), Honolulu

2 a.m. (Saturday)

ESPN: UFC Fight Night Prelims: Undercard Bouts, Busan, South Korea

NBA BASKETBALL

8 p.m.
ESPN: Dallas at Philadelphia

10:30 p.m.
ESPN: New Orleans at Golden State

NBAGL BASKETBALL

3 p.m.
<b

Couple quarrels over money spent on their granddaughter

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I are retired and financially comfortable. I have my spending money, and he has his. The problem is, he doesn't want me to spend any money on my granddaughter.

I pick her up from school every day, give her an afternoon snack, and on Friday, we stop and get something special. My husband thinks my daughter should pay for my gas and provide snacks for her child. I disagree. I love doing things for my granddaughter and buying things for her every once in a while. When I do, he goes nuts, packs up his clothes and goes to his camp. After a few days he will call.

I have lived with this behavior all our married life (55 years). He has fussed so many times and made me so depressed, I just want to die. He says he loves me, but I wonder. If he loved me, he would want me to be happy — doing things with my granddaughter and getting her pretty things every now and then because it makes me happy.

I don't go out and get my hair or nails done. I don't drink or smoke, and we don't go out to eat at expensive restaurants. His complaining is driving me crazy, and I can't live like this anymore. She's 10 and growing up so fast. All I want is to enjoy her the little while I have left. Advice? — Blocked Grandma In Louisiana

DEAR GRANDMA: After 55 years of tolerating your husband's tantrums and controlling behavior, I seriously doubt you are going to get him to change. You can, however, change the way you react to it. If you have money of your own, he does not have the right to tell you how to spend it. Let him go camping, and while he's gone, enjoy your time with your granddaughter. If he "goes nuts" — which I assume means becomes verbally abusive — leave the room.

Ask yourself whether you are better off with this man or without him. And if you truly cannot live like this anymore, talk to an attorney and explore your options.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have a friend of 35 years I'll call Hank. Hank had an accident three months ago. His vehicle was totaled, and he has been depending upon us to take him grocery shopping and to various appointments. When we take him, he often adds additional stops without asking ahead of time, which turns a quick trip into a marathon shopping excursion.

We still work part-time, while Hank is retired. He is procrastinating about buying another vehicle, citing various reasons why he can't find the right one, and we are becoming exhausted from driving him around. We have mentioned several times that he needs to get a vehicle; his response is, "It's not easy."

We feel sad that our friendship has taken this turn. We have tried to be as helpful as possible, but our patience is wearing thin. What do you suggest? — Worn Out In The Southwest

DEAR WORN OUT: I suggest you stop making yourselves so available when Hank asks for transportation. If you do, it may stimulate him to look more diligently for a new vehicle, or explore other rideshare options.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Logically sound
- 6 Brooding
- 11 Shark
- 12 Copper "rust"
- 13 Mount Hood site
- 14 Stage-coach robber
- 15 "Peer Gynt" dramatist
- 16 Painted tinware
- 17 Ply the seas
- 19 TKO officials
- 23 Puppy plaint
- 26 Housefly or ant
- 28 Malt brew
- 29 Veneer
- 31 Fabulous fabulist
- 33 Dry white wine
- 34 Road
- 35 Many many years
- 36 Cry loudly
- 39 Hwys.
- 40 Old ruler of Venice

DOWN

- 42 Bradbury and Coniff
- 44 Back muscles
- 46 Clueless
- 51 Soda buys
- 54 Newspaper staffer
- 55 Heavy and awkward
- 56 Chemical compound
- 57 Monet temporary
- 58 Ms. Wither-spoon
- 10 Swing off-course
- 11 King, in France
- 12 Lifeguard beats
- 16 Dead heat
- 18 Orangutan
- 20 Assuaged
- 21 Polar bear perches
- 22 Equinox mo.
- 23 Boor
- 24 Clinching
- 25 Poor review
- 27 Do lacework
- 29 Mr. Astaire
- 30 Society miss
- 32 Foul up

Answer to Previous Puzzle

SCAB	RIFT	WOW
LIME	URDU	EGO
OID	BEARABLE	
WINERY	BUSES	
COCO	HOG	
KOOKY	ELSE	
REP	TOED	ROAM
ERAT	ZERO	GNUN
DEMO	ELAND	
QBS	URGE	
OCCUR	PSALMS	
MOREOVER	FACT	
ARI	KEPI	TREE
REB	EXAM	SEEM



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SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★



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How to play:

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

7	9	5	8	1	4	2	6	3
3	2	1	6	5	7	8	9	4
6	4	8	9	2	3	7	5	1
4	6	3	5	9	2	1	7	8
9	1	2	7	6	8	3	4	5
8	5	7	3	4	1	6	2	9
2	3	6	4	8	9	5	1	7
1	7	4	2	3	5	9	8	6
5	8	9	1	7	6	4	3	2

7 9 5 8 1 4 2 6 3
3 2 1 6 5 7 8 9 4
6 4 8 9 2 3 7 5 1
4 6 3 5 9 2 1 7 8
9 1 2 7 6 8 3 4 5
8 5 7 3 4 1 6 2 9
2 3 6 4 8 9 5 1 7
1 7 4 2 3 5 9 8 6
5 8 9 1 7 6 4 3 2

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Spain rocked by rulings that renew questions over Catalonia

BY LORNE COOK
and CIARAN GILES
Associated Press

BRUSSELS — Spain was thrown into turmoil on Thursday by court rulings that could undermine Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez's hopes of forming a new government and force fresh elections in the region of Catalonia.

In a potentially stinging reversal for Spanish justice authorities, the European Union's top court ruled that a former Catalán official serving a prison sentence for his role in a banned independence referendum two years ago had the right to parliamentary immunity when he was on trial.

A court in Spain, meanwhile, found that Catalonia's current president, Quim Torra, is unfit to hold office for 18 months for disobeying the country's electoral board, a decision likely to lead to more elections in a region riven by protests.

Pro-separatist Catalán politicians applauded and shouted "freedom" after the Luxembourg-based European Court of Justice ruled that former Catalán regional Vice-President Oriol Junqueras had earned the right to immunity when he was elected to the European Parliament in May.

The ECJ said that people like Junqueras who are elected as EU lawmakers "enjoy, from the moment the results are declared, the immunity" to travel to and take part in parliamentary sessions.

After the verdict, Junqueras, 50, tweeted: "Justice has come from Europe. Our rights and those of 2,000,000 citizens who voted for us have been violated. Annulment of the sentence and freedom for all! Persist as we

have done!"

Junqueras was sentenced in October to 13 years in prison for sedition. Eleven of his associates were found guilty and eight of them also received prison terms.

He was in pretrial detention when he was declared to have won the European Parliament seat. But Spain's Supreme Court refused to allow him to leave prison to take an oath to respect the Spanish Constitution, a national requirement for politicians to serve as EU lawmakers.

The Spanish electoral commission later declared Junqueras' seat vacant and suspended his parliamentary prerogatives.

The ECJ made no criticism of his trial, and it's unclear if the court's ruling might secure his release. However, it could seriously complicate the efforts of Spain's ruling Socialist party to form a new government following an inconclusive election last month.

The Socialists won the most seats but not a majority. They're now stuck in tortuous talks with Junqueras' Catalán Republican Left party, hoping the party's representatives in the national parliament will not vote against Sánchez's government and let the Socialists hold onto office, albeit with a minority.

With the court ruling in Junqueras' favor, the Catalán Republican Left could feel emboldened to press its demand for Catalonia's right to self-determination to be recognized, something Spain doesn't even remotely contemplate.

Spain's Supreme Court said it would study the full ruling and gave prosecutors and defense lawyers five days to present their argu-

ments, after which a decision will be made.

Spain's state prosecutor's office asked the Supreme Court to inform the European Parliament that Junqueras is no longer in preventive custody, as the ECJ ruling said, but has been convicted and sentenced.

The prosecutor's office wants Junqueras to serve his time and for the EU assembly to drop his parliamentary status.

At a plenary session in Strasbourg, France, lawmakers applauded politely as EU parliament President David Sassoli read out the ECJ decision, describing it as a "very important ruling" for the makeup of the 751-seat assembly.

He tasked the parliament's legal services with working out the implications of the verdict.

The case is likely to set an important precedent for fugitive former Catalán leader Carles Puigdemont, who was also elected to the European Parliament in May and has been living in exile in Belgium. Spain wants him extradited on charges of sedition and embezzlement.

Puigdemont has also launched an appeal at the ECJ. A court in Brussels ruled earlier this week that it would await the outcome of his European case before deciding whether to extradite him.

At his residence outside Brussels on Thursday, Puigdemont and former Catalán health minister Toni Comín cheered and applauded the verdict along with other regional politicians joining them by teleconference.

"If we can be at the European Parliament, and we will be, it is because we were able to fight for our rights

from an independent space, with legal guarantees, which is something that doesn't happen in the Spanish state," Puigdemont said.

The verdict in the Spanish case against current Catalán leader Torra came after clashes between riot police and protesters during a soccer match between Barcelona and Real Madrid as authorities struggled to keep separatist activists from disrupting the game.

Torra was banned from holding office for disobeying Spain's electoral board by not removing secessionist symbols from public buildings in the northeastern region during an election campaign.

Torra, who is fervently in favor of independence and Catalonia's right to self-determination, told the court he did not believe the electoral board had the right to order him to remove the symbols.

Torra said his lawyers would appeal but added in a statement that he has "zero confidence" in Spain's legal system, saying the ruling against him was politically motivated and aimed at the "repression" of Catalonia's desire for independence.

The 2017 referendum on whether Catalonia should break away received an overwhelming "yes" vote but was marred by a police crackdown. Those in favor of the northern region remaining part of Spain largely didn't cast ballots after Spain's central government declared the vote illegal.

Subsequent regional elections have indicated that the relatively wealthy northeast region of 7.5 million people is evenly split between those in favor and those against independence, and the divisions are barely hidden.

What crackdown? Migrant smuggling business adapts, thrives

BY MARIA VERZA
and CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN
Associated Press

gler had promised some 310 miles to the south in Los Amates, Guatemala, near the border with Honduras. There, \$7,000 promised a care-free journey to the U.S. border aboard luxury buses with meals included.

Now he could only think of his daughter and the \$4,000 they had already paid and couldn't afford to lose.

"I risked my daughter because they told me that we weren't going to suffer, that we were going to come comfortably, eating well, but it was all a lie," said the man, who agreed to be identified only by his middle name, Jesús, out of fear for his family's safety. "On the journey it's another reality."

His organization, though he didn't name it explicitly, is the Sinaloa cartel.

The hardening of U.S. and Mexican immigration policies has "complicated" the business because there are more security forces on both sides of the border, but Manuel isn't worried. Yes, there are fewer risking the journey and the out-of-pocket has mounted with the need to pay ever-escalating bribes. But the cartel also charges more. Conclusion: The money keeps flowing.

In a year of dramatic policy changes on both sides of the border, smuggling networks have adjusted: higher prices, some new work-arounds, attractive "package deals" for every budget, as well as tried-and-true smuggling techniques that include well-trodden routes and generous bribes.

The U.S. then reached a series of bilateral agreements with Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador aimed at making it much more difficult for migrants crossing those countries to seek asylum in the U.S. The impact has been swift: Total apprehensions and those deemed inadmissible at ports of entry at the southern border reached 977,509 migrants from October 2018 until the end of September, the highest number since 2007 — and a more than 87% increase since the same period a year earlier.

In turn, migrants were pushed "into mafia hands," deciding that paying a smuggler was the only way to make it across the border, said Guillermo Valdés, a former Mexican intelligence director. Mexico's immigration agency says it has identified 18 such smuggling networks operating in nine Mexican cities.

And the price of the journey has grown, often surpassing \$10,000 for those from Central America. But there are enticements, like the "package" deal: \$3,000 to \$6,000 to deliver an adult and a child across the border in hopes they'll be picked up by U.S. Border Patrol and released into the U.S. to await their asylum cases.

That was Jesus' plan — \$7,000 all-inclusive for his family of three.

He paid the initial \$4,000 installment and departed Honduras on Aug. 15 with instructions to take a series of buses across Guatemala to the border town of La Mesilla. There the family crossed into Mexico aboard a van with other migrants

with only a cursory glance from a lone Mexican soldier.

That's where Jesús' dream turned into a nightmare as his family and about 150 other migrants, mostly families like his, were piled

into the semi-trailer and the truck rumbled north.

Indian police ban protests amid citizenship law outrage

BY EMILY SCHMALL
and ASHOK SHARMA
Associated Press

NEW DELHI — Police detained several hundred protesters in some of India's biggest cities Thursday as they defied bans on assembly that authorities imposed to stop widespread demonstrations against a new citizenship law that opponents say threatens the country's secular democracy.

Protests raged around the country despite the bans as opposition widened to the law, which excludes Muslims. The legislation has sparked anger at what many see as the government's push to bring India closer to a Hindu state.

Authorities erected road blocks and disrupted internet and phone services, including in parts of New Delhi, and tightened restrictions on protesters in the northeastern border state of Assam, which is where the protests began last week.

A curfew was imposed in parts of Mangalore, a city in southern Karnataka state, after police fired warning shots and used tear gas and batons to disperse a large group of protesters, the New Delhi Television news channel said.

Protesters also clashed with police in parts of Lucknow, the state capital of northern Uttar Pradesh state, where police said one person died from a gunshot fired by someone among the protesters. The protesters torched a bus, hurled rocks at police and damaged some police posts and vehicles, police said.

The new citizenship law applies to Hindus, Christians and other religious minorities who are in India illegally but can demonstrate religious persecution in Muslim-majority Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. It does not apply to Muslims.

Critics say it's the latest effort by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist-led government to marginalize India's 200 million Muslims, and a violation of the country's secular constitution.

Modi has defended it as a humanitarian gesture.

Rather than contain uprisings, the protest bans appear to be helping them spread — from Assam and a handful of university campuses and Muslim enclaves in the capital — to campuses and cities from coast to coast.

"I think what is wonderful is that young people all in their 20s have so vividly understood the game plan, which is to divide people," said Zoya Hasan, a political scientist in New Delhi. "What people are saying is that you are going to divide, we are going to multiply."

The protests come amid an ongoing crackdown in Muslim-majority Kashmir, the restive Himalayan region stripped of its semi-autonomous status and demoted from a state into a federal territory last summer.

They also follow a contentious process in Assam meant to weed out foreigners in the country illegally. Nearly 2

million people were excluded from an official list of citizens,

about half Hindu and half Muslim, and have been asked to prove their citizenship or else be considered foreign.

India is also building a detention center for some of the tens of thousands of people the courts are expected to ultimately determine have entered illegally. Modi's interior minister, Amit Shah, has pledged to roll out the process nationwide.

Critics say the process is a thinly veiled plot to deport millions of Muslims.

The Modi government, which won a landslide re-election in May, had been able to push through those parts of its agenda without much opposition. That changed with the citizenship law.

"This may be a crack in the edifice" of the Modi government, said Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, a political analyst and Modi biographer.

Some of the country's unwieldy and divided opposition parties have found common ground in condemning what they say has been a heavy-handed official response to the protests.

It's a good rallying point for the opposition because it is "a battle for liberal and democratic values," said Asaduddin Owaisi, a lawmaker and president of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen party.

Video on Thursday captured

historian Ramchandra Guha, a biographer of independence leader Mohandas Gandhi, manhandled by police as he was detained in Bangalore, the capital of southern Karnataka

state, where the government issued a ban on groups of more than four people gathering.

Guha told New Delhi TV on Thursday evening that police crammed him and hundreds of others who were detained into a wedding hall and let them leave later without explanation.

"As abruptly arrested, we were abruptly released," he said.

In New Delhi, Yogendra Yadav, a well-known political activist and the chief of the Swaraj India party, was among the more than 100 protesters detained at the city's iconic Red Fort and the surrounding historic district.

Protesters loaded into buses and jeeps shouted "down with Delhi police" as they were driven away.

Also worrying to protesters was the blocking of internet and phone services, a tactic authorities often use in Kashmir to try to prevent protests, but one rarely used in the capital.

"In this country we do not even have freedom to protest. It's very disappointing," said Upika Chahan, a social worker who took the day off work to protest at Red Fort.

Chahan, who is Sikh, said that while the citizenship law doesn't discriminate against her religious group, it doesn't augur well for India.

"If it's affecting one element of the ecosystem, sooner or later it's going to affect everyone in the ecosystem," she said.

Australia's most populous state declares wildfire emergency

BY TRISTAN LAVALETTE
Associated Press

PERTH, Australia — Australia's most populous state of New South Wales declared a seven-day state of emergency Thursday as oppressive conditions fanned around 100 wildfires.

Around 2,000 firefighters were battling the blazes, half of which remain uncontrolled, with the support of U.S. and Canadian backup teams and personnel from the Australian Defence Force.

The last state of emergency ran for seven days in mid-November amid "catastrophic" fire risk and was the first

implemented in New South Wales since 2013. Central Sydney reached a maximum of 102 Fahrenheit on Thursday, while outer suburbs scorched at 108 F.

A statewide total fire ban announced on Tuesday will remain in place until midnight on Saturday.

Around 7.4 million acres of land has burnt nationwide during a torrid past few months, with six people killed and more than 800 homes destroyed.

The annual Australian fire season, which peaks during the Southern Hemisphere summer, started early after

an unusually warm and dry winter.

New South Wales Premier Gladys Berejiklian said authorities were concerned with the unpredictable conditions.

"With extreme wind conditions, extreme hot temperatures, we have a good idea, a good sense, of where the most concerning areas are, but again when you've got those turbulent conditions, embers and spot fires can occur very unpredictably," she told reporters.

Rural Fire Service Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said five 100-member "strike teams" were on stand-

by to deploy to the most dangerous fires.

Sydney's air pollution levels on Thursday ranged from poor to hazardous. During the past month, hazardous smoke has often blanketed Australia's most populous city and made its iconic skyline barely visible.

Hospitals have recorded a 10 percent increase in visits from patients with respiratory conditions during the past week.

The Australian Medical Association has recommended people keep hydrated, cool and out of the sun.

Wildfires are also burning

in Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia.

The Bureau of Meteorology said Tuesday was the hottest day on record in Australia with an average of 105.6 F nationwide.

Perth, the capital on the west coast, is experiencing its hottest December with average temperatures for the month at 97 F and seven degrees above the mean.

Adelaide, in the southeast, is currently experiencing a four-day heatwave culminating in a sizzling 113 F on Thursday.

The unprecedented conditions have reignited debate

on whether Australia's conservative government has taken enough action on climate change. Australia is the world's largest exporter of coal and liquefied natural gas.

Protesters on Thursday camped outside Prime Minister Scott Morrison's Sydney residence demanding urgent action on climate change.

Morrison, who is currently on holidays, conceded last week that "climate change along with many other factors" contributed to the wildfires.

Cooler temperatures are forecast on Friday before conditions worsen Saturday.



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